



Rocky Mountain National Park News Release

September 9, 2005
For Immediate Release
Kyle Patterson 970-586-1363

Longs Peak Rescue Update Friday Morning

Last night park rangers carefully moved Jeff Villano up 700 feet in a difficult technical rescue from the top of the Trough to the summit of Longs Peak. They arrived at the summit at 10:00 p.m. Due to darkness Villano was not flown out. Eleven park staff remained on Longs Peak through the night with Villano, who is in good condition and receiving pain medication. A paramedic from the Estes Park Medical Center is with the group.

High winds and low visibility have hampered efforts to fly him off of Longs Peak this morning. Temperatures were very cold last night, estimated to be in the 20s. The group also has dealt with rain, sleet and winds from 5 to 30 miles per hour with gusts above 35 miles per hour. Plans are currently underway to carry Villano off of the summit. The best route for the technical rescue carryout is being determined based on winds and slick, wet rocks. As the carryout proceeds, weather will continue to be monitored to see whether Villano can be flown out from the Boulderfield.

At approximately 11:00 a.m. yesterday, Thursday, September 8, Rocky Mountain National Park dispatch received a call that Jeff Villano, a 37 year-old from Lakewood, Colorado, had fallen 20 feet along the Keyhole Route near the top of the Trough on Longs Peak and broken his leg. The initial call came to park dispatch through Larimer County dispatch and was from someone on a cellular phone who was with the victim.

He was at approximately 13,600 feet and the summit of Longs Peak is 14,259 feet. An initial "hasty" team left the trailhead at 11:35 a.m. The first ranger reached Villano at 2:28 p.m. The trailhead of Longs Peak is at 9,400 feet and it is 7.5 miles to the summit of Longs Peak.

A Lama helicopter from Trans Aero based in Cheyenne, Wyoming assisted with flying park rangers and equipment to the summit of Longs Peak yesterday. Approximately 17 people were involved in this incident yesterday. Today an additional 16 park staff are hiking up the Longs Peak trail to help with the litter carryout of Villano. Another 16 person team will be heading up the trailhead at noon, including members of Larimer County Search and Rescue and Rocky Mountain Rescue Group.

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